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Mattawan police officer killed in line of duty to be remembered

MATTAWAN – Village of Mattawan Police Officer Scot Beyerstedt, who was killed in the line of duty on July 26, 2005, will be remembered during a 20th anniversary memorial service, Saturday, July 26, at 11 a.m. at Mattawan Memorial Park, Front Avenue and Main Street.

On the evening of July 25, 2005, Officer Beyerstedt, 21, was critically injured in a crash during a police pursuit of a wanted felon. He was rushed from the scene to a Kalamazoo hospital, where he died from his injuries the following day.

Police Chief praised for lifesaving efforts in Ludington possible drowning

The Village of Paw Paw on Monday, July 14, praised the efforts of Village of Paw Paw Police Chief Eric Rottman for his life saving actions in a report of a possible drowning that occurred that day in Ludington, Mich.

On Monday, July 14, at approximately 11:55 a.m., the Ludington Police Department, Ludington Fire Department, and Life EMS were dispatched to Stearns Beach in response to a report of a possible drowning involving a teenage female. The initial caller reported that the individual was being pulled from the water by friends.

A Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Conservation Officer, who was in the vicinity at the time, was the first to arrive on scene, followed shortly by officers from the Ludington Police Department and a Michigan State Police Trooper. Upon arrival, first responders found an 18-year-old female from Ada, Mich. who was breathing and now had a pulse.

First responders immediately placed the individual in the recovery position and administered appropriate first aid until Life EMS arrived and assumed care. The victim was transported to Corewell Health Ludington Hospital Emergency Department, where she was stabilized before being airlifted by AeroMed to Corewell Health Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids. As of the time of this release, the patient remains in critical but stable condition.

The press release concluded, "The Ludington Police Department would like to express sincere gratitude to the bystanders who acted quickly and decisively, helping to remove the victim from the water. Special thanks are also extended to Village of Paw Paw Police Department Chief Eric Rottman and a family member, who immediately began CPR efforts that are believed to have been lifesaving.

"We also extend our appreciation to all agencies that provided assistance, including the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan State Police, Mason County Sheriff's Office, Ludington Fire Department, and Life EMS."

2-vehicle crash sends one to hospital with serious injuries

Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbot reported that on July 10, Van Buren County Sheriff's Office deputies were dispatched at 3:38 p.m., to the area of County Road 388 and 68th Street in Geneva Township for a two-vehicle crash. Initial callers reported that one of the vehicles was on fire and one person possibly unconscious. Arriving on scene, deputies located two vehicles with heavy damage in front of a local business. Statements provided to deputies, as well as evidence on scene, showed that a 2022 Hyundai was eastbound on County Road 388. It attempted to turn into the local business and was struck by a 2025 Chevrolet headed westbound on County Road 388. The driver of the Hyundai had serious injuries and was transported to the hospital for treatment. A Good Samaritan removed the driver of the Hyundai from the vehicle and another Good Samaritan used a fire extinguisher to put out a small fire on the Hyundai. Deputies were assisted on scene by SHAES and Harbor Towing.

Photos courtesy/ Van Buren County Sheriff's Office

LAWTON CELEBRATES!

Last weekend the town of Lawton was filled with people in celebration of Summerfest. See more photos on Pg 2.

Lawton's Summerfest returns following last year's downtown road construction

LAWTON - Following a year's absence due to downtown road construction and improvements, the Lawton Summerfest returned, Saturday, July 12. Highlights of the day included a parade with Grand Marshal Tom "Ozzie" Osborne, and fireworks at dusk. Also on Main Street, many local vendors and crafters featured their wares. The Lawton Fire Department Hall featured a variety of activities, including kids' games and face painting. Food trucks were in operation at the fire department parking lot. Bounce houses were set up at Reid's Corner. The Summerfest Parade stepped off at 5 p.m. Evening entertainment featured The Bronk Bros.

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2ND FRONT PAGE

Scott Club receives $50k grant for elevator

By James Windell

A $50,000 grant from the Timken Foundation caps an amazingly successful six months of fundraising and grant writing for South Haven's Scott Club.

According to Scott Club President Carol Anderson Kunze, the grant, the largest ever awarded to the Scott Club, will help fund the installation of a lift to make their building fully accessible.

"With this grant," says Kunze, "we are within $14,000 of our budget target for the lift." The cost of the lift is estimated at $248,000.

During the first quarter of 2025, Kunze and Anna Krajecki, Chair of Building and Grounds as well as Scott Club Vice-President, contacted lead donors who contributed or pledged a total of $120,000 – about half of the needed funds. Since then, through additional donations and grants and the additional fundraiser of partnering with SHOUT for the Cottage Walk, Scott Club has received donations or commitments totaling $234,000.

After more than 130 years in their building at Phoenix Street and Pearl Street in South Haven, the Scott Club's building will finally be getting a lift so all patrons can attend programs on the second floor.

This project was initially announced at the launch for the Scott Club LIFT Open House on Saturday, May 17, 2025. At the time, Kunze said she was thrilled to announce that the Scott Club Board of Directors unanimously approved a project to install an elevator between the ground and upper levels of the historic building to make it fully accessible.

The Scott Club is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that provides bimonthly educational and entertaining programs and a concert series. All events are open free to the public, and members participate in monthly book discussions, special tours and social events.

Originally, the Scott Club began in 1883, when pioneer women Lucy Carnes and Lucy Rogers organized a group of friends to expand their horizons through the study of literature, other countries and cultures. Books were read aloud and discussed, and a dictionary was brought to each meeting to facilitate learning new words.

In May, 1892, the Scott Club purchased one-third interest in a lot owned by the Antiquarian Society and the Literary and Library Association. Those organizations invited the women of the Scott Club to join them in construction of a Literary Hall in 1892 for the use of the three organizations. The building was designed by John Cornelius Randall, who designed many elegant homes in South Haven. It was built of Indiana sandstone, in Queen Anne architecture style with a Moorish dome.

According to Kunze, great care went into developing the elevator project so as to maintain the building's historical significance. The building is considered a Michigan Historic Site. Installation of the lift will take place in 2026.

Currently the upper level of the Scott Club, where most programs and concerts are held, is only accessible via a narrow, steep staircase. Those with mobility limitations are able to view the programs via a flat screen with audio on the ground level and remain there where post-program refreshments are served. The lift will allow all attendees at programs and events to fully participate in and enjoy the experience.

"We appreciate the support from Lovejoy, whose plant in South Haven is a Timken company," says Kunze. "The Lift Project is underway, and lift installation will take place in the first quarter of 2026."

The Scott Club has pending grant applications and is seeking broad community support to raise the remaining amount needed for the project. Donations or pledges for donations can be sent to Scott Club, P.O. Box 54, South Haven, MI 49090. Also, donations can be made securely online at www.scottclub.org.

Lawrence Garden Club to host 79th Garden Show

LAWRENCE - The public is invited to participate and attend the Lawrence Garden Club's 79th Flower Show, Fantasia in Flowers, Friday, July 25 and Saturday, July 26, at the Van Buren Conference Center, 490 S. Paw Paw St., Lawrence.

Friday hours are 1 to 5 p.m. and Saturday hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event will include displays of floral designs, as well as horticulture specimens. A panel of three judges will award ribbons and top scoring entries will receive gift certificates donated by are area businesses.

This is a free event, and the garden club welcomes entries from the public that can be brought to the conference center on Thursday, July 24, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., or Friday, July 25, from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.

The Lawrene Garden Club has been part of the Lawrence community since 1930.

For more information visit the garden club website at: www.lawrencegardenclub.com or the Facebook page Lawrence Garden Club. Show schedules are available online and at the Lawrence Branch Library.

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70th annual Van Buren Youth Fair ends weeklong run on Saturday

HARTFORD – The 70th annual Van Buren Youth Fair, which got underway July 14, will wrap up its weeklong run on Saturday, July 19.

Thursday through Saturday, July 17 through 19 nightly grandstand features include:

Thursday, July 17, 7 p.m., Lost Nations Rodeo.

Friday, July 18, 7 p.m., Super Kicker Rodeo Production, sponsored in part by Honor Credit Union.

Following the rodeo, at dusk, a free fireworks show will light up the fairground sky.

Saturday night, July 20, at 6, TNT Bump 'n Run, plus Demo Derby, will conclude the grandstand entertainment.

Free nightly music in the fair's Community Tent, on Thursday, 7 p.m., will be Carrie McFerrin; Friday, 7 p.m. – Full Measure; Friday, 9 p.m. – Scott Spears Trio; Saturday, 7 p.m. - Waylon Hanel; Saturday, 9 p.m. – The Boomers.

The Magic of Trino will conclude Saturday with two shows at 3 and 5 p.m.

Whispering Pines Mobile Zoo will also be on display through Saturday.

General admission is $10 for adults; $8 for senior citizens; children, six to 12, $5; and five and under, free. Gate season passes are $35 for adults; senior citizens, $30; children, ages six to 12, $25; and five and under are free.

For more information, visit: vanburenyouthfair.com., or call (269) 621-2038. The fair is also on Facebook.

The fairgrounds are located on the corner of County Road 681 and Red Arrow Highway, midway between Lawrence and Hartford, 55670 County Road 681, Hartford.

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Wife lodged for allegedly assaulting husband in Almena Twp.

Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response handled a domestic violence call in Almena Township. After investigating the incident, the wife was lodged for assaulting her husband.

Uniform Response handled an illegal entry/stalking incident in Keeler Township. "An ex-boyfriend showed up and entered her residence in the middle of the night and was also making threats. The suspect came from another state to commit the illegal act," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. The suspect was gone prior to the deputy's arrival. A report is being sent to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for review and charges.

"There was an Emergency Alert System Test on July 16, at 10:50 a.m. It went out on the TV, radio, and mobile systems. The counties included Van Buren, Berrien, and Allegan. Back up times/dates were July 16, at 11:50 a.m. and July 17, at 10:50 a.m. Again, this is only a test," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response had a quad runner flee in the early morning hours in Hartford Township. While pursuing the quad, the driver lost control, went into the ditch, and crashed. "The driver sustained injuries from the crash and needed to go to the hospital to be treated. The suspect now faces charges for the incident," said Sheriff Abbott.

Uniform Response handled incidents involving bait and switch tactics. "Different individuals have claimed to work for a driveway paving and repair company who say they have sold and applied crushed asphalt to a neighbor's driveway and have material left over. The suspects give the victims a low-ball quote to do the project on their driveway then intimidate the victims to get more money (thousands) immediately after some material is put on the driveway," said Sheriff Abbott.

"The Van Buren County Youth Fair is going this week. Stop out and enjoy a day/evening there supporting our youth," said Sheriff Abbott.

"Our Office of Domestic Preparedness/Emergency Management has been doing drills for several weeks now preparing for Holtec's reopening. This past week a page went out to different individuals that would be paged in due to a possible emergency/failure. The drill went very well just like all the other drills/trainings," said Sheriff Abbott.

Deputies attempted to arrest a fugitive on a felony warrant out of St Joseph County in Pine Grove Township. "The suspect wouldn't come out, so a search warrant for the RV was obtained. While attempting to gain entry through the door, a pipe bomb was set off on the other side of the door. Deputies took cover and notified Dispatch and Command what took place. Deputies maintained the perimeter while the SWAT Team was activated along with other deputies. The suspect threw two more pipe bombs out of the RV at SWAT Team Members. Less lethal rounds were shot at the suspect, hitting him, causing him to surrender. The suspect was treated for his injuries, and then ultimately charged with 18 felonies. No law enforcement was injured during the incident. The deputies, SWAT Team members, and Undersheriff Casey Davis, who runs the SWAT Team, did a great job in handling the scene. Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety's Bomb Squad and MSP's Crime Lab assisted with the scene," said Sheriff Abbott.

Dispatch took a call about a possible drunk driver near Armstrong Corners. "Deputies were able to get behind the vehicle, observe poor driving, and make a traffic stop. The driver was arrested for operating under the influence of alcohol. Once again, a huge thank you to the caller/community for calling this in. When the community is willing to make these calls, it helps us do our jobs and make our community a safer place," said Sheriff Abbott.

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Pullman Pride celebrates the community

By Gari Voss

The Pullman Pride Celebration will begin Friday, July 18, 2025, with a concert by Crazy Mic at the Pullman Tavern, but this is just the beginning of the 24th year that Pullman and Lee Township have celebrated their youth. The goal is to bring the community together to have fun while raising money for the Dee Wesbey Scholarship Fund.

Moving into Saturday, July 19th at 8am, the day begins with a pancake breakfast served up by the Lee Township Fire Department then features a fabulous car show at the Linking Center, a Craft Show in the Pullman Town Square, a Corn Hole Tournament sponsored by the Pullman VFW Post 6134, Disc Golf behind Pullman Elementary, and activities at the Linking Center for Seniors and children.

Throughout Saturday, baby photos can be submitted for the Cutest Baby Contest plus animal photos can be submitted for the cutest animal. There will be activities for younger children outside the Linking Center and on their new playscape. Raffle tickets can be purchased at the VFW Post, and Medieval games will be offered for free at the MFS ReelPlay Center and Sigil Metaphysical. Conversations around Pullman's history will continue at the museum in the Pizza Plus parking lot.

It is imperative that everyone pick up a Passport at the Pullman Town Square. Follow the map while moving around town to enjoy the activities and get the Passport stamped. Everyone 18 and over can drop off their completed Passport at the VFW Hall on 109th Avenue to get entered in the raffle drawing. There are great prizes including $100 in cash.

Ann Hatfield, a township trustee and member of the planning team, shared, "We have so much to celebrate together! This is the 24th year of supporting our youth as they seek post high school opportunities and of celebrating the pride we have in our community. This year's Pullman Pride event will include some favorite activities and some new ones."

The Pullman Pride Planning Committee began meeting in March to plan this event. In addition to including a township trustee, the team is comprised of members from Beautify Pullman, the VFW Post 6134, People Helping People (PHP), and local businesses. The team hopes that residents and visitors will enjoy the day and continue to support the funding of the Dee Wesbey Scholarship Fund that has supported dozens of Lee Townships students as they pursue their desired careers.

"This is a community-wide event, and everyone is encouraged to come out and enjoy all that Pullman has to offer," Hatfield added. "There is still time to get involved!"

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY JULY 18

- 6-10pm Live music: by Crazy Mic @ The Pullman Tavern

SATURDAY JULY 19

- 8am-11am Pancake Breakfast @ Lee Twp Fire Station on 109th
- 9am-3pm 5th Annual Car Show @ the Linking Center 925 56th (For Car Show information email: mike@phppullman.org.)
- 9am-3pm Craft Fair/Vendors @ the Pullman Town Square (Reserve space at Craft/Vendor Fair email: ann@phppullman.org.)
- 9am-3pm Lee Township Cutest Baby Photo Contest (look for the roaming photo board throughout downtown to vote). To submit a baby photo: contact Joan Laraway 269-906-5180 with a $10.00 fee to enter
- 11am-2pm Pullman History Talk @ Museum (Pizza Plus parking lot)
- 10am-3pm Younger kids activities outside @ Linking Center
- 10am-Noon Disc Golf at course behind Pullman Elem. School (Open play, bring your own discs)
- 10am-8pm Medieval games and celebration free all day @ MFS Reelplay Center / Sigil Metaphysical (109th & First St.)
- 11am-2pm Senior Fun & Lunch @ the Linking Center
- Noon-8pm Food/Drink Specials, Pet Photo Contest & Raffle @ the Pullman VFW Post 6134 @ 5632 109th
- 1pm Cornhole Tournament @ Pullman VFW (Registration at Noon). Contact Joan at 269-906-5180.
- 3pm Movie Matinee @ the Linking Center

2024-25 DEE WESBEY SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Pullman Pride Celebration continues to impact the youth of Lee Township. Twenty-four years ago, Lee Township began Pullman Pride Day to celebrate their community and bring people out for a day of fun. The funds raised were put in an account for the Pullman Pride/Lee Township Scholarship to be awarded to high school graduating seniors who live in Lee Township so they could pursue post high school education. In the beginning, two $500.00 scholarships were awarded each May. In 2016, a generous donation by the Wesbey family provided resources to increase the scholarship award to $1,000 each. In 2025, three scholarships were awarded.

Alyssa Hernandez Garcia was awarded a $1,000 scholarship. Alyssa is a Bloomingdale HS graduate who plans to attend Ferris State University to become a dental hygienist. "Growing up as a kid, I've seen how close everyone is in the small town of Pullman. However, many people who live in Pullman are low-income. I plan to use my degree to volunteer in free dental clinics around Pullman to help families in need of dental health care."

Mary Green is a Bloomingdale HS graduate who was awarded a $1000 scholarship. Mary's family lives on property dating back to her great grandparents. "I feel deeply rooted in the community. My family runs a farm stand where those in need can get produce and flowers for free. We recognize the high food costs and that many struggle financially, and we hope it helps people feed the families in our neighborhood." Mary is planning on attending Lake Michigan College for a teaching degree.

Janely Salazar received a $1,000 scholarship. Janely is a Bloomingdale HS graduate and plans to attend Grand Valley University to study Cardiovascular Ultrasound. "Growing up in Lee Township has shaped me into the person I am today, instilling in me a deep sense of resilience and empathy. I am determined to make a lasting impact on my community and want to be a role model for those who are facing similar struggles, by showing them that with perseverance, education, and a strong work ethic, they too can rise above their circumstances. I hope to inspire others to believe in themselves, regardless of where they come from."

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OBITUARY

Patricia Anne Pratley

Patricia Anne Pratley was born on March 19, 1948, and passed away to Heaven on July 11, 2025.

Her parents were Patricia Ann (Drake) Lauer and Gilbert Earl Whittet, who preceded her in death.

Pat was united in marriage to Dr. Daniel C. Pratley on August 17, 1968. They shared nearly 60 years together, 57 of those years married.

Pat graduated in 1966 from Homer Community Schools. After graduation, she attended Kellogg Community College and Kalamazoo Valley Community College, where she studied accounting. Pat started at the Upjohn Company the summer after she graduated high school and continued to work there for 15 years as a cost accounting clerk until she and Dan adopted their first daughter in 1981.

Dan and Pat moved to Lawton in 1976. She loved her community and had a passion for volunteering. Over the years, she served in several volunteer positions within the community, including treasurer of the Lawton Parent's Group, president of the Sunshine Club, representative of the Parent Advisory Committee for Special Education, and as the statistician for Lawton football for 30 years and for Lawton basketball for 28 years. She also worked on the committee that helped build the Kids Dream Playground in 1994. She was an active member of the Lawton Lions Club, where she served as bingo chair for several years and president for two years. Dan and Pat enjoyed 15 summers at their cottage on Huzzy Lake, where Pat served as treasurer on the Huzzy Lake Association. She was awarded Volunteer of the Year in the Village of Lawton in 1998 and was also awarded Volunteer of the Year from Homer Community Schools in 2006.

Pat was very involved with her daughters. She volunteered with their Girl Scout troops for several years and as the registrar for the Singing Sands Girl Scout Council for 17 years. She enjoyed volunteering at Camp Shawadasee as a nurse, leader, or any other role they needed filled. She was a huge advocate for Special Education, and served on the Roadrunner Parent Group at the Bert Goens Learning Center.

One of the most important aspects of Pat's life was her faith and her church. She served as a Deaconess for five years and volunteered in the nursery and many of the children's rooms. She also helped with the Awana program. She served as the church treasurer for 46 years and a greeter for 20 years. She enjoyed planning the church Christmas parties and singing in the choir.

Following her daughter,Rachel's graduation in 2005, Pat went to work at the Van Buren Research and Development Foundation as treasurer. There, she helped provide scholarships to graduating seniors in the area K-12 school districts. She retired in 2014.

Pat is survived by her husband, Dan; and daughters, Debbie Pratley, Rachel (Dan) Boswell, and special daughter, Danielle (Matt) Foll. She is also survived by six grandchildren, Jacob, Lucas, Oliver and Elliott Boswell, Arrianna (Gavin) Cole, and Jasper Foll; her uncle, Richard VanWerden of Kalamazoo; step-sister, Jeannie Williams of Augusta; two cousins; several nieces and nephews; and several brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law also survive.

Pat will be deeply missed.

Family and friends are invited to visit on Friday, July 25, from 6 to 80 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 32464 E. Red Arrow Highway, Paw Paw. A time for visitation will be held on Saturday, July 26, from 10 to 11 a.m., with a memorial service at 11:00 a.m., with the Rev. Buddy Turner officiating. The family invites everyone to the Lawton Community Center, 646 N. Nursery Street, Lawton, after the service for a time of food and fellowship.

Memorial contributions in memory of Pat may be directed to First Baptist Church of Paw Paw, 32464 E. Red Arrow Highway, Paw Paw, MI, 49079.

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VIEWPOINT

It's Time for the Fed to Lower Interest Rates – Before It's Too Late

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

The Federal Reserve has done its job. Inflation, which recently reached its highest point in forty years, has gradually moderated. The labor market, while still resilient, shows signs of softening. Consumer confidence is shaky, small businesses are tightening their belts, and borrowing costs are squeezing everything from mortgages to car loans to credit card payments. It's time for the Fed to recognize the changing landscape and begin lowering interest rates.

The Fed's core mission is twofold: ensure price stability and maximize employment. Over the last two years, the focus was rightly on inflation, which spiraled in the wake of pandemic-related supply shocks, massive stimulus, and surging demand. But now, inflation has fallen to near the Fed's 2% target. The argument for continuing high rates is growing weaker by the month.

Meanwhile, the damage from high interest rates is becoming harder to ignore. Homebuyers are sidelined, unable to afford mortgage payments with rates hovering around 7%. Builders are pulling back. Small businesses—many of which are the lifeblood of rural communities and small towns like those across Michigan—are finding it harder to access affordable credit. Consumer debt is rising sharply, with delinquencies creeping up.

Even Wall Street, often a cheerleader for higher rates when inflation runs hot, is now signaling concern that the Fed is holding rates too high for too long. Market volatility, slowed investment, and nervous forecasts are flashing yellow lights. The longer rates stay elevated, the more likely it is that we'll tip from a soft landing into a full-blown recession.

The global picture adds another layer. Europe is cutting rates. Canada is easing. China is struggling with deflation. If the U.S. stands pat, we risk a stronger dollar, weaker exports, and global imbalances that could undercut American manufacturing and farming—industries that are already under pressure from foreign competition and rising input costs.

Some Fed officials argue that rate cuts should wait until inflation is "sustainably" at 2%. But that target was never meant to be a red line, it's an average. Insisting on hitting it precisely before making any move is like refusing to take your foot off the brake until your car comes to a dead stop, even as traffic speeds away.

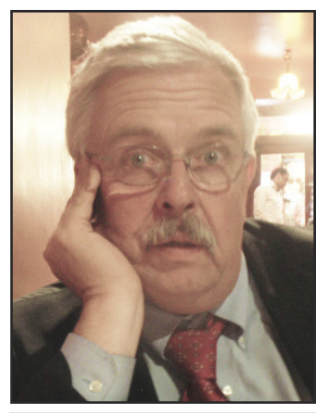
Then there is the dreaded fear of tariffs, and what they will do to the economy. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, who many are calling for his resignation, has said he wants to wait and see what the effects of tariffs are on the economy. However, we've had tariffs for several months with very little effect. That excuse is no longer valid.

There's also a political dimension here. The Fed is supposed to be independent, and it must avoid being seen as playing favorites in an election year. Some say lowering interest rates prior to the 2024 presidential election was just that, a political move to help the Democratic ticket. But staying on the sidelines out of fear of perception is just as dangerous as acting too soon. Doing the right thing—based on data, not optics—should always come first.

It's time for a shift in thinking. Holding rates high when inflation has cooled is no longer sound monetary policy—it's economic self-harm. The Fed should start easing before economic momentum stalls completely. A gradual, measured rate-cutting cycle would send the right message to markets, to households, and to businesses: that the worst is behind us, and that America is ready to grow again.

The Federal Reserve has shown great courage in the past. Now it must show wisdom. The data is in. The economy is cooling. The pressure is real. Lower the rates. Let America breathe again.

Life as Performance Art



G CORWIN STOPPEL

The optics don't look regarding how our nation is handling the immigration situation.

My ancestors came to the U.S. in the 1840s seeking a better life, more freedom from overreaching clergy and government, and a chance to own their own land. Their story has been repeated tens of millions of times since the 1620s.

Our nation's history is one of immigrants. "History might not always repeat itself, but it usually rhymes," Mark Twain said. Alas, every group or wave of immigrants has experienced animosity, repression, discriminatorv and sometimes violence.

When the Irish came on heels of the mid-1840s potato famine, they were not wanted. In east coast port cities where they arrived, signs in store windows read "Irish not served," "Irish need not apply (for work)" and worse.

For generations, some Irish immigrants lived in big city slum districts and took work no one else wanted — cleaning homes and stores, in factories, rolling cigars and other piecework, hauling garbage, mucking out stables and removing dead horses from the streets. Others became firefighters and police officers — low-status jobs at the time.

It happened again when Germans came to this country, many trying to escape tyrannical rulers and church officials. Russians and Eastern Europeans, mainly Jews, came to escape the barbaric pogroms of czars and rulers.

In time Italians came here, escaping economic hardships and wars in their country. More recently we have seen a huge migration of people from Latin and South America, as well as poverty-stricken and war-torn Haiti.

All came to the U.S. to escape a dreadful situation at home and seek a better life for themselves and their children. They were willing to live in horrid apartments no one else wanted and work long hours for little pay.

The American ethos has long been to accept the desperate and extend a helping hand to those in need. Even when we have not done a great job of it, that is what we claim to believe.

A great challenge faced by new immigrants was and remains animosity from those who came in previous generations. In New York, riots against the Irish were common. A few years later, in Cincinnati and other places in the Midwest, the rioters turned on Germans. We have seen and know all too well of the brutality against Jews, Catholics and others. We still see it happening.

That anger results from fear. Of what? "They" will take low-paying, tedious, backbreaking jobs "we" don't want to do? "They" might marry into "our" families?"

Fear is expressed with dire warnings about criminals and bad actors. Really? A fictional tale about a street gang or crime makes a good story. No one is interested in reading about the perseverance of the vast majority of those who came to this country.

For example, no one has made a movie about the Harner family who moved from Sweden to Aurora, Ill. They were bakers and like many first-generation immigrants lived above the shop. "We let our business build our home," was a persistent message they taught others after they came to America.

We are seeing a lot of animosity aimed at our latest immigrants, and those optics are not good because they are not who we profess to be.

A new detention center was just built in the Florida Everglades surrounded by pythons and alligators. That alone is a bad optic. Even worse is when we see people grinning in approval that anyone who tries making a run for it might become dinner for a dangerous reptile.

Once we run out of illegal immigrants to detain or deport, and families to break up, who will be next? Once a lack of empathy is established as the new ethos, hatred always needs another victim.

One example of this was when the French Revolution got out of hand. First it was the king, queen and some members of the nobility, then it worked its way down the social hierarchy to working class people. It was a steady progression of hate.

The same thing happened a decade or so ago between two major tribes in Rwanda. It happened in communist Russia and Nazi Germany. In China, if someone is accused of having "wrong ideas" they lose many of their civil rights and freedoms until they have been rehabilitated in education camps.

Only the naïve will proclaim, "It Can't Happen Here!" That was the title of a 1935 Upton Sinclair novel showing how easy it would be for an American president to imitate the rise of European dictators.

In it, a presidential candidate named Windrip rallies voters behind his promises of tremendous economic reforms that would bring prosperity to the people, using a populist message to whip up their fears. He promises to restore America's greatness.

To enforce his message, Windrip has his own army of Minute Men who rough up members of the opposition. When necessary, they fix bayonets and storm into crowds of protestors.

Windrip wins the election, defeating both the Republicans and Democrats, then eliminates the power of the legislature and the courts. Just as the new president expected, the crowds go along with everything he says and does.

It is not long before Windrip turns on his own supporters, exiling or eliminating the men who helped elect him. Opposition reporters and editors are shipped off to concentration camps while others flee the country. Some simply disappear.

In time, people begin to realize that Windrip is a hollow blowhard and bully who knows nothing about economics nor how to lead a nation. A devastating civil war is the inevitable end.

Lewis wrote this novel about the 1930s Louisiana populist demagogue Huey Long, but scholars have repeatedly seen similarities, such as when FDR established prison camps for Japanese Americans, Nixon "masterminded" Watergate, on and on.

"Whether this is first day of the Apocalypse," wrote a longtime friend recently, "or the first day of the Golden Age, our work remains the same — to love each other and ease as much suffering as possible."

Let's commit ourselves to doing the right thing.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WAS THE REVERSAL OF ROE A PYRRHIC VICTORY?

Dear Editor:

After almost a half century, the Supreme Court of the US corrected its misinterpretation of the law (and good conscience) in its 1973 Roe versus Wade decision. R v W discovered—buried in our Constitution—a "right" to abort and kill the unborn. It was buried because it was always a dead notion, but the Supremes caved to the temper of the times and the nagging persistence of the my-body-my-choice vocalists. For fifty years folks in the Right to Life movement prayed, paraded, supported pro-life politicians, and sadly, some misled fanatics even resorted to violence.

The early release of the Supreme Court's decision in 2022 written by the great Sam Alito was an unauthorized—and as yet unpunished—breach of both ethics and tradition, but it provided abortion supporters a head start to mobilize their minions to begin work undermining the return of abortion laws to the states. We in Michigan paid a heavy price for this subterfuge. We—our babies—continue to pay dearly.

While we were elated to have the ropes of Roe removed from the necks of our unborn, the passage of Proposition 3 occurred because of a well-funded (mainly out-of-state money) and intense campaign filled with lies and misinformation. Thus, we have suffered a "Pyrrhic victory" which is defined as a "win" which costs more in life and treasure than a defeat might.

Prop 3 not only enshrined a right to abort into our state constitution, but it now allows abortion for any reason up to the moment before a full-term baby is born. This is more infanticide than a medical procedure. There is still a law here which bans the killing of a baby born in a botched abortion, thankfully, but the duplicity of this so-called protection underscores the abortion industry's refusal to recognize that THE SCIENCE is set: human life begins at conception; any abortion is the taking of that life

Another aspect of the Pyrrhic victory is that there has been an actual increase in the number of abortions both in Michigan and in the US. Getting exact numbers is unfortunately now impossible because there is no longer a requirement to report abortions or any complications associated with them. The majority of abortions continue to occur because pregnancy and a child are inconvenient for the mother due to finances, career choices or pressure from the father. (It is still illegal to coerce a woman or minor girl to have an abortion against her will, but recently our state's attorney general has sued to remove the requirement that a woman be screened to determine if coercion has occurred because it might delay the procedure unnecessarily!!)

More than half of all abortions are now the result of a combination of pills which may or may not be prescribed by a doctor who has a relationship with his or her patient. Anyone can now mail order these pills. There are restrictions upon when the pills should be taken—currently up to 10 weeks after the last menstrual period—and there are complications associated with the pills of which a patient may not be aware such as an ectopic pregnancy. A woman who has problems is advised to report to an emergency room, and many, it is suspected, tell the health care provider that they are suffering a spontaneous abortion, that is, a miscarraige, without admitting to having taken the pills. Again, with no reporting requirements, it is impossible to know the exact number of tragedies associated with home-administered abortifacients. Of course, for the aborted baby, whether it is flushed down the toilet, or it must be surgically terminated, the complication is always terminal and fatal.

Who pays for this? Currently, taxpayer-supported MEDICAID is not supposed to pay for an abortion except for rape, incest, or a risk to the life of the mother, but there are always exceptions, and there are continuing attempts to reverse Hyde Amendment restrictions on government-subsidized abortions. (It is estimated that as many as 270,000 babies have been saved because of no taxpayer funding of abortion.) Private insurance is also available now. Much of Planned Parenthood's funding comes from the government under the pretext of reproductive health services, and the "big beautiful" bill recently passed by the US Congress and signed by the President removed funding for Planned Parenthood. A federal judge has put a hold on that, as expected, so, in short, pro-life citizens may, directly or indirectly, end up continuing to provide resources for death, depending on location.

In Michigan, licensing and inspection of abortion facilities is no longer required. So much for the mantra that abortion is a reproductive HEALTH issue. Similarly, fetal tissue is not considered to be a medical waste, so it can be disposed of just like household garbage.

Currently, informed consent and parental consent are required, but depending upon the make-up of our Michigan legislature that can change. A woman must be given information about the procedure and its potential complications, she must wait 24 hours prior to the abortion, and she must be allowed to view an ultrasound. A minor female must have parents' or a judge's permission before obtaining an abortion. For now…….

For the future mom who may be confused and needs guidance: 1-800-712-HELP

Did the reversal of Roe versus Wade meet our expectations and usher in a new era of fewer abortions with a societal consensus that a human life is lost with each abortion? It appears not, so what must we do now? First, contact your representatives both state and national and make sure they know we are not giving up, not giving in, to the culture of death. Second, join our state Right to Life (<www.rtl.org>) or a local affiliate such as Van Buren County Right to Life (<vbrtl.org>). Last, support the many robust alternatives and pregnancy care centers which are privately funded, operated by wonderful volunteers of which you can be one, and let moms and dads know that they can choose: LIFE—THE OTHER CHOICE.

Jack Bley
Paw Paw

Reader asks SH to welcome all candidates

Dear Editor:

Do any of our citizens realize how unwelcoming we are as many visitors are asking "What is going on in this community regarding the local election?" Our citizens have been approached on the street and asked this question. It is alarming that no one person in a leadership role in this community will step-up and ask those involved in degrading someone running for office to please remove the negative signs and campaign on issues rather than personalities.

South Haven is better than this. Everyone qualified should have the opportunity to run for office and the outcome of the election will determine who are future leaders will be. I do hope that we elect leadership who will speak up when our community is brought down to such a low level - Are we really the circus that many have recently called our local government? Let's all work together to be a town we can be proud of.

Kathy Straits
South Haven

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SPORTS

Bangor basketball team has busy summer

Bangor's girls basketball team has had a very active summer

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Area high school teams were keeping busy in the summer, getting ready for the 2025-26 seasons.

"Bangor girls basketball had a great June of practices and scrimmages, both locally and at Ferris State," coach Bret Witkowski said. "The Lady Vikings performed well in their scrimmages and had the opportunity to scrimmage a D-3 team that finished 25-1 last season with all their starters back. What was exciting was seeing how the returning players remembered the offensive sets and different defenses.

"Shooting-wise, they performed well from the field, shooting 70 percent as a team from the free-throw line in their summer scrimmage. The Vikings will have six returning varsity players for 2025-2026 and will have a deep bench. Last year, the Vikings struggled to rebound, but with the returning players and the addition of a new post player, the Vikings rebounded much better in the summer."

Witkowski said in the off-season, the Vikings will look to continue to improve their skills.

"The summer captains of senior Madison Lennox, Isabelle Horvath and Junior Alexis Wisniewski met and picked the slogan for the upcoming season: 'No Shortcuts.'"

Shaefer excited over next season for Paw Paw

Stella Shaefer was Paw Paw's standout center fielder.

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — It was around a month ago that junior outfielder Stella Shaefer and her Paw Paw softball team accepted the Division 2 state runner-up trophy after falling 3-0 to Richmond.

But now, Shaefer, and all of her teammates who will be back in 2026, are working during the off season to have what they hope will be another memorable campaign next spring..

"We believe in each other like no other," Shaefer said after the title game. "The faith that we have in each other goes a long way even in games like the semifinal game when Elizabeth hit that home run. None of us were nervous because we believed in her and believed in each other. We were conference, district and regional champs.

"We've shown Paw Paw what we can do and we'll be back next year."

She was referring to Elizabeth Vanderburg, who hit a walkoff two-run homer in a dramatic 3-2 win over Carleton Airport in the semifinal game.

"We're sad it's over but we know we're gong to be right back next year," Shaefer said. "Now we're hungry for it and we want it more than ever."

Schaefer had a huge running catch in center field of a deep fly ball in the title game that kept Paw Paw's hopes alive.

"I was running and thinking I had to catch it or else a run was going to score," she said. "I played shortstop my whole life but last year, my sophomore year, I ran into center field, played it and have played ever since. Speed is my strength.:

She was happy with how she hit the ball all season.

"I give my team credit for hitting me in," Shaefer said. "I'm so grateful forall these girls."

This was her second varsity season.

"We've played together since we were 7 or 8," she said.

She also played basketball for Paw Paw.

Burrous, Mayne have strong seasons for Lawton

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — Lawton celebrated a powerful state finals boys track and field season with a fourth place finish at there state meet.

In the Division 3 state finals, Cheasning was first at 57, followed by Pewamo-Westphalia (34), Reed City (33), Lawton (32), Hart (29), Ovid Elsie (28) and Centreville (25).

Greyson Burrous had a strong season for Lawton. He was fourth in the 100-meter state finals race in 11.12 seconds. Burrous was also SAC Conference and regional champion. His 4x100 relay team was sixth in 43.95 seconds at the state meet.

Mason Mayne had a terrific season as a senior. He won the state finals in the shot put at 59-9.75 and won the discus at 180-9.

Throughout the season, Mayne competed in 12 meets and finished first in each one in the shot put and discus. His personal record was 185-6 in the conference meet for the discus and 61-3 in the shot put, also in the conference meet.

Mayne also ran the 200-meter dahs three times during the season with a personal record of 24.61 seconds the SAC meet.

South Haven athlete set for national triathlon

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Zander Duncan is coming off a unique sophomore season as a South Haven athlete.

He was a state qualifier in swim last year as a sophomore, Duncan was a running back for the JVs with 15 TDs and over 800 yards rushing and 1300-plus all purpose yards and sprinter for track, in the 100 meters, 200 meters and 400 meters and sprint relays.

He took first place in a local Triathlon in June.

"His time qualified him for the national triathlon in Wisconsin in August which he will participate in," South Haven track coach Trevor Smiley said. "We are super excited for Zander and this experience."

Duncan was a sprinter for South Haven.

In the 100-meter dash, he had a personal record of 11.80 seconds in the SAC Conference meet. He placed ninth. In the 200 meters, he was 15th in the Shamrock Invitational with a personal record of 24.25 seconds. He had placed second in the Fennville SAC Tri with a time of 24.64 seconds.

He was on the 4x100 relay which had a first place in 49.30 seconds in the first meet of the season at South Haven. He was also on the 4x200 relay which had several first and second places this season.

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SPORTS

Gobles wrestlers working hard

Gobles wrestlers stay active during the summer

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Gobles wrestling coach Erin Carlin has been having an active summer program for his athletes.

It includes strength and conditioning training with the school strength coach four days a week. There have also been regular team practices and open mats.

There have also been team day camps with various guest clinicians and a team overnight camp at Central Michigan University.

"It's been very similar to past seasons," Carlin said. "The clinicians and overnight camps have been changed based on our perceived needs going into the 2025-26 season."

Carlin said he gets between 15 to 20 boys high school wrestlers to attend the various sessions and it's roughly the same as it's been in the past.

"We talk a lot about being above the line, at the line, or below the line in terms of what the norm is for a quality program. We have a core group of kids who "get this" and inherently understand that things that come easy in life are usually not worth it," Carlin said. "Some of these kids do a good job at rallying the others to get on board with our mission.

"We have several wrestlers who have been competing in summer events. We also have a few kids traveling to Indiana, every day, to work with Chris Fleger. In addition, we have wrestlers actively participating in local clubs like Apex and testing their mettle at SMC open mats in 2-to-3 days per week."

Carlin added: "Active participation in a summer program is imperative for a program that merely wants to be 'at the line. Above the line' teams find ways to do more. Moreover, engaging in wrestling over the summer is likely one of the best things a kid can do to improve his/her skills for their fall Sports.

"Having said that, the gift of summer wrestling practices allow coaches to slow things down and really dig into techniques, and have the kids learn from each other. Perhaps, one of the most important benefits of the summer program is the additional time we can spend on the mental processing of the grind and how it helps build better humans."

Mattawan runners staying in shape

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — John Ablao is the head cross country coach at Mattawan and has been keeping his runners busy this summer in order to get ready for the 2025 season.

"We've had optional running with and without coaches, depending upon MHSAA guidelines," Ablao said. "Some athletes go to running team camp at Leelanau Outdoor Center in August.

"We have learning opportunities regarding firm and racing strategies."

Ablao said numbers have been higher than in the past. He said he's getting from between six to 15 athletes.

"We meet at different locations in the greater Kalamazoo area such as Al Sabo, WMU, homes, Celery Flats," Ablao said, adding some his athletes go to a Grand Valley State University Camp and other camps.

Ablao is a big fan of having his runners work out during the offseason.

"It's very helpful," he said. "Summer running brings successful goals in the fall during the season."

The fall practice season officially begins on Aug. 11. There will be team camp Aug. 14-17 and the Under the Lights Invitational on Aug. 22. The Southwest Michigan Rustbuster Cross Country Invitational is on Aug. 27. The Lakeview Invitational is on Sept 6.

Robertson led the way for Lawton girls

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWTON — Megan Robertson and Alyssa McNally were a strong one-two punch for Lawton in the 2025 track and field season.

Robert won the regional pole vault at 9 feet. McNally was third at 8-6.

Roberts was 13th at the state finals.

Tiara Ellis also had a strong season for Lawton's girls track team.

A strength for Ellis was the 100-meter dash. She finished seventh in the regionals with a time of 13.63 seconds.

In the prelims, Ellis had a personal record of 13.52 and was sixth.

She also had a strong 200-meter dash season with a personal record of 27.96 seconds in the Shamrock Invitational.

Ellis wagon the 4x100 relay team which included Halie Bishop, Alyssa McNally and Daisy Larsen. It was fourth at regionals and first at various meets including the Parchment relays.

Ellis was also on the 4x200 relay which had a season's best of 1:54.64. Daisy and Annabelle Karsen and Gabriella Halloway were also on that relay team .

Peyton Bell was fourth in the regionals in the 800-meters in 2:44.85 for a personal record.

Halie Bishop was another top Lawton athlete with a fifth place finish in the regional's 100-meter hurdles in 17.62 seconds. Gabriella Holloway was fourth in the 300-meter hurdles in 49.87 seconds while Bishop was seventh.

Annabelle Karsen was fourth on the shot put at regionals with a throw of 31-11.75.

South Haven track coach likes future prospects

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — The 2026 South Haven track season is a long ways away but coach Trevor Smiley is excited with his season prospects.

Top prospects include:

Emily Thomas (SR) dual sport w/ soccer, state qualifier in long jump (16' 7.5"), 200m and sprint relays.

Zander Duncan (JR) in the 100m, 200m (11.8 / 24.1) and sprint relays.

Grayson Knox (SR) pole vault (11-5 5th all time at SHHS)

Ethan Swearingen (FR) Pole vault (11-9 as an 8th grader).

Ciro Abdul-Haqq (SO) 100m 200m (11.6 / 23.45) and sprint relays

Neco Washington (SO) 100m. 200m. 400m (12.1, 24.7, 55.1) and sprint relays.

August Zoet (SR) long jump (20-1.5) 100m, 200m and sprint relays.

Kaitlyn Buero (SO) 200m (27.4).

Devi Blunt (SO) 200m, 400m (28.4 / 1:06.59).

Gianna Fazio (JR) 200m (27.6)/

Madisyn Lapinski (JR) 400m (1:08.3) and cross country.

Olivia Weaver (JR) Pole vault (8-0)/

"We had some of the best assistant coaches," Smiley said, referred to:

Lindsay DeLorme (XC / long distance).

Wendy Spencer (Mid distance plus).

Mara Givhan (Throws).

Ashton Fields (Pole vault).

Volunteers were: Ryan Newberry (jumps); Ben Holt (PV)

Mark Lewis (Everything SH Track, recently inducted into South Haven athletic Hall of Fame.

Lawrence runners getting ready

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — Lawrence cross country Rod Sturgis likes the offseason activity he's seeing from his athletes.

"Lawrence XC has used the summer months to conduct run club activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6 p.m.," he said. "There are not a great deal of changes this summer with regards to the Lawrence cross country team. We pride ourselves on consistency and a process that promotes healthy runners.

"We are staying consistent with the numbers as far as the kids showing up for run club and actually have quite a few more kids signed up for XC than in previous years. We will see if the sign ups turn into numbers for the season."

It does take some work on the coach's part to get players enthused with offseason running.

"Communication is the key to getting kids to turn up," Sturgis said. "I try to spread the word in multiple ways to get kids to show up and run cross country for Lawrence."

Any activities that kids can do that gets them outside and moving is key to in season and early season success. Summer run club for our kids is hugely important for kids who want to improve as runners and have success during the season.

Any other comments?

Lawrence XC had a good number of kids sign up who are in middle school. Thats very encouraging and a step in the right direction in terms of getting kids into the program and developing the depth we need to sustain the program.

South Haven track and field has busy summer

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Trevor Smiley is South Haven track coach and his program has had a very active summer.

He points out SHHS track and Field offers seven weeks of two days/week strength and sprint work. Tuesdays from 6:30 a.m.-8 a.m. and Thursdays at the track 6:30-8 p.m. Cross country offers 6 a.m. runs four days a week for eight weeks.

"Limited traction and participation, however, I believe many of the athletes are attending RAM POWER which is three nights a week and their fall sports camps, etc." Smiley said. "The hope is to continue developing the mindset that athletes who want to be at the top of their sport need sprint training.

"Sprinting, it has been said, is 'the tip of the spear in sports performance.' No coach of any sport wants slow athletes. But who can resist the warmth and tranquility of Southwest Michigan during the summer? It can be just what the doctor ordered."

Smiley noted the South Haven track program has two opportunities presented this summer. First is an overnight leadership and team building retreat. It's open to any and all SH's grades 10-12. Only $40 for two days and one night at Camp Warner (Grand Junction). Space is limited.

"Additionally, we are continuing the tradition of providing a summer youth camp," Smiley said. "This year it will be Wednesday and Thursday Aug 6-7 from 3-5:30 p.m. Coaches and athletes from SMC will also be in attendance to provide expertise and leadership.

It is free for incoming 4th through 9th grade. Anyone interested can check out the SHPS website at shps.org and search Summer enrichment programs.

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New chiropractor comes to South Haven

By James Windell

A chiropractor who aims to grow a family practice and work with generations of people now calls South Haven her home.

Dr. Izzy Vandermolen, founder of The Haven Chiropractic, is a pediatric and perinatal-focused chiropractor who brings a deep passion for wellness and family care to her new practice.

Although new to South Haven, Dr. Izzy, as she likes to be called, was born and raised in Holland, Michigan, and received chiropractic care herself from the time she was an infant. Her mother worked in a chiropractic office and her parents used chiropractic as a first response for everyone in the family.

"From the moment I was born throughout my childhood," Dr. Izzy said in a recent interview, "I was involved in chiropractic. I had a primary doctor as well, but we were a chiropractor-first household."

Her early exposure to chiropractic care inspired a lifelong commitment to health, leading her to pursue her Bachelor's Degree in biomedical sciences at Grand Valley State University. This was followed by obtaining her Doctorate of Chiropractic from Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa.

After working in a chiropractic clinic in Grand Rapids, she decided to start our own business. "I wanted to build a business so I could do things the way I want to do them," she says. But she wasn't sure where she would locate that business.

"I knew I wanted to be along the lakeshore somewhere in West Michigan," she explains. "It worked out for me to be in South Haven where I started working with Dr. Richard Oberheu, who has an office here. He offered me a place to start for the first couple of months."

Not only was Oberheu welcoming to Dr. Izzy, but so were others. "The other chiropractors in town have been really wonderful to me," she says. "They have helped me feel included here. Now I have Dr. Christine Taylor right next door to me, and she's been great. South Haven has been a really great community so far."

She says that she does a lot of work in her practice with pregnant women and also with kids. "I really like working with athletes, particularly kids in middle school and high school," she says. "It's very important to help prevent injuries in the first place, but also to work through injuries as they happen. My hope is to prevent wear and tear from happening."

Dr. Izzy has had additional training and certification to work with pregnant women. "I'm Webster Certified," she says, "which means that I am certified to work with pregnancy. I can help work with the pelvis and a woman's body so that she is able to have a healthier pregnancy and so that her nervous system is well-balanced because that helps with labor."

When she was growing up, her aunt had a cottage in South Haven and Dr. Izzy spent time at the cottage each summer. "I've loved South Haven since I was a child," she says. "Now I'm trying to get as involved as possible with the community. "

The Haven Chiropractic is located at 418 Broadway, Suite 8, South Haven. For more information, visit drizzuvm.dc@gmail.com

June real estate stats for South Haven, Covert & Bangor

By Ryan Servatius

Average Sales Price:
June 2025: $407,085 (+ 4%)
June 2024: $390,717

Average Sales Price YTD (Year to Date):
2025: $529,520 (+ 37%)
2024: $ 385,548

Median Sale Price:
June 2025: $ 302,500 (-12%)
June 2024: $342,500

Median Sale Price YTD (Year to Date):
2025: $372,500 (+ 9%)
2024: $341,250

Units Sold:
June 2025: 35 (+ 21%)
June 2024: 29

Units Sold YTD (Year to Date):
2025: 164 (- 1%)
2024: 166

DOM (Days on Market):
June 2025: 37(- 8%)
June 2024: 40

Days on Market YTD (Year to Date):
2025: 55 (+ 20%)
2024: 46

Dollar Volume:
June 2025: $14,248,000 (+ 26%)
June 2024: $11,330,800

Dollar Volume YTD (Year to Date):
2025: $88,429,881 (+ 38%)
2024: $64,001,051

The number of residential listings on the market in December totaled 101 units, the lowest since March, 2024 when there were 97 listings on the market.

REO/Bank Owned is at 8 for June 2025, which is an increase over May that was at 6 for Southwest Michigan and the highest of the year where the numbers have ranged from 2 to 6 units per month.

The South Haven market did not see its usual Spring bounce, but has seen a stronger demand happen in June and this continues into the start of July with pent up demand and a normalization of acceptance of interest rates settling into the historical range we are currently seeing for 30 year mortgages.

Ryan Servatius is a Real Estate Broker in South Haven and Stats come from Southwestern Michigan MLS transactions.

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NOTICE - PUBLIC LAND AUCTION

The Van Buren County Treasurer will offer tax-reverted real estate at public auction online at **www.tax-sale.info.**

The first auction will be held on **August 27th, 2025 from 10:00am to 7:00pm EDT.** Bids can also be placed up to 30 days in advance on the website. Assistance is available for those without computer or internet access.

Incomplete or voided sales from the August 27th, 2025 auction, if any, will be re-offered on September 26th, 2025 from 10:00am to 7:00pm EDT.

Unsold tax reverted real estate from either of the previous auctions, if any, will be re- offered on October 31st, 2025 in a sealed- bid auction. All bids must be placed by 7:00 pm EDT for this final sealed-bid auction.

Answers to common questions about the auction process and additional information can be found at **www.tax-sale.info/faq**

For more information and to view a list of the properties being offered, please visit **www.tax-sale.info** or call 1-800-259-7470.

Auction listings may also be available at the County Treasurer's office.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Porter Township , Van Buren County
Special Meeting • June 25, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the special meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. No guests present.

- Motion by Packer with support by Bitely to approve the Senior Services of Van Buren County agreement and terms contributing $36,000 per year for 5 years, funds to be used toward the cost of the Porter Township Hall Addition, with first payment beginning 8/1/2025. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Packer with support by Nesbitt to accept the bid from Maple Lake Builders to build the Porter Township Hall Addition, at an amount not to exceed $340,000. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to adjourn the special meeting at 6:05 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather Smith
Porter Township Clerk

Porter Township , Van Buren County
Township Hall Addition Bid Opening Public Hearing • June 11, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the Bid Opening Public Hearing to order at 6:15 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis.
Supervisor Oxley closed the public hearing at 6:20 pm.

Budget Public Hearing • June 11, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the Budget Public Hearing to order at 6:30 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis and one guest.
Supervisor Oxley closed the public hearing at 6:37 pm.

Fire Special Assessment District Public Hearing • June 11, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the Fire Special Assessment District Public Hearing to order at 6:37 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis and one guest.
Supervisor Oxley closed the public hearing at 6:45 pm.

Road Special Assessment District Public Hearing • June 11, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the Road Special Assessment Public Hearing to order at 6:45 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis and three guests.
Supervisor Oxley closed the public hearing at 6:55 pm.

Regular Meeting • June 11, 2025

Supervisor Oxley called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present – Oxley, Bitely, Nesbitt, Packer, and Smith. Also present – Attorney Moraitis and seven guests.

- Motion by Packer with support by Nesbitt to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on May 14, 2025. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to approve the Treasurer's report subject to audit. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Packer with support by Bitely to approve the bills as amended. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to contribute $500 to the 2025 Van Buren Conservation District Resource Recovery & Recycling Program. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Packer with support by Bitely to renew the Assessor contract through May 31, 2026 at a rate of $3,527 per month. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to amend the General Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 in summary form. Total revenue of $1,077,910 less total expenditures of $885,670 for a net increase in fund balance of $192,240. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Nesbitt to amend the Fire Fund budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 in summary form. Total revenue of $194,700 less total expenditures of $189,920 for a net increase in fund balance of $4,780. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to approve the General Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 in summary form. Total revenue of $1,104,365 less total expenditures of $1,468,604 for the proposed net decrease in fund balance of $364,239 together with a projected beginning fund balance of $1,288,327 for the projected year end 2026 fund balance of $924,088. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to approve the Fire Fund Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 in summary form. Total revenue of $287,500 less total expenditures of $604,920 for the proposed net decrease in fund balance of $317,420 together with a projected beginning fund balance of $598,255 for the projected year end fund balance of $280,835. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Smith with support by Packer to accept the Truth in Taxation Reduction for 2025. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Packer with support by Nesbitt to renew Township-Wide Special Assessment District and spread the roll for Fire Protection at a rate of 1.5 mils (one and one-half mils), for the tax year 2025. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Nesbitt with support by Packer to reaffirm Township-Wide Special Assessment District for the cost of Construction, Improvement and Maintenance of Public Roads at a rate of 1.0 mil (one mill), for the tax year 2025. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Nesbitt with support by Packer to hire Kalamazoo Woodwork to build a custom storage cabinet in the Township Hall meeting room, at a cost not to exceed $3,000. Roll call vote – all yes. Motion passed.
- Motion by Bitely with support by Packer to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm. Voice vote – all yes. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heather Smith
Porter Township Clerk

State of Michigan Probate Court Van Buren County
Notice to Creditors Decedent's Estate
Case No. 2025-1088-DE
Estate of Brenda Carey, Deceased
Date of Birth: August 09,1941 (8/9/1941)
To all Creditors:

Notice to Creditors: The decedent, Brenda Carey, died January 26, 2017 (1/26/2017)
Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to Sherman Carey, c/o Shek Law Offices, P.O.Box A, Allegan, MI 49010, personal representative, or to both the probate court at 212 E. Paw Paw St., #220, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and the personal representative within 4 months after tthe date of publication of this notice.

July 9, 2025

Attorney
James Shek P37444
PO Box A
Allegan, MI 49010
(269) 673-6125
Personal Representative
Sheman B. Carey
3010 Alder
East Chicago, IN 46312
(773) 392-2009

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: MARGARET MINER; ATTY: TEAM X; 1ST PUB: 6/26/2025; ATTY FILE #: 524401F01; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 31, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Margaret M. Miner and Wesley E. Miner, wife and husband
Original Mortgagee: Michigan Home Finance
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Metropolitan Life Insurance Company
Date of Mortgage: February 5, 2007
Date of Mortgage Recording: February 12, 2020
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $94,653.99
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Bloomingdale, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: The West 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section, 9, Town 1 South, Range 14 West, according to the Government Survey thereof.
Common street address (if any): 41704 6th Ave, Bloomingdale, MI 49026-9704
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: June 26, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1565012

(06-26)(07-17)

NEW PUB -> COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: CHAD M. HOFFMAN; ATTY: ORLANS; 1ST PUB: 6/26/2025; ATTY FILE #: 25-006790; INSURER: (UNKNOWN)
ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 14, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Chad M. Hoffman and Sylvia L. Hoffman, husband and wife, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for GMAC Mortgage Corporation, Mortgagee, dated November 3, 2004 and recorded November 12, 2004 in Liber 1425, Page 803 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely in its capacity as trustee of Citigroup Mortgage Loan Trust 2024-RP1, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Sixty-One Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty and 58/100 Dollars ($61,920.58).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on AUGUST 14, 2025.
Said premises are located in the City of Bangor, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as: LOTS 1 AND 2 BLOCK 8 MONROES ADDITION TO THE VILLAGE (NOW CITY) OF BANGOR, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, 35 E Monroe Street, Bangor, Michigan 49013
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: June 26, 2025
File No. 25-006790
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(06-26)(07-17)

COUNTY: VAN BUREN; MTGR: JESSE STONE; ATTY: TEAM H; 1ST PUB: 7/3/2025; ATTY FILE #: 524395F01; INSURER: FNMA
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on July 31, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Jesse Stone and Stephanie N. Stone FKA Stephanie Fabian, husband and wife
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC
Date of Mortgage: November 18, 2020
Date of Mortgage Recording: June 14, 2021
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $153,034.08
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Pine Grove, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: That part of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional
1/4 of Section 6, Town 1 South, Range 13 West, described as: Beginning at the Southeast corner of said North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4 of said section; thence North 00 degrees 40 minutes 39 seconds West, on the East section line, 592.93 feet; thence South 89 degrees 34 minutes 34 seconds West, parallel with and 66 feet South of the North line of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4, 220.45 feet; thence South 00 degrees 40 minutes 39 seconds East, parallel with the East section line, 592.81 feet to the South line of the North 1/2 of the South 1/2 of the Northeast fractional 1/4; thence North 89 degrees 36 minutes 22 seconds East, on same, 220.45 feet to the place of beginning.
Common street address (if any): 01464 M 40, Gobles, MI 49055-9075
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: July 3, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145, Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1565480

(07-03)(07-24)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Village of Lawton Adopts New Rental Licensing Ordinance — Registration Deadline Set for January 1, 2026

LAWTON, MI — The Village of Lawton has enacted a new Rental Property and Short-Term Rental Licensing Ordinance aimed at enhancing the health, safety, and overall welfare of residents and visitors. This ordinance, adopted by the Village Council, establishes new requirements for property owners who rent residential units or short-term rentals within the Village.

Under the new ordinance, **all rental properties—both long-term and short-term—must be registered and licensed** through the Village. The registration process includes an inspection for compliance with safety and maintenance standards. These inspections are based on a comprehensive checklist covering both interior and exterior conditions, available on the Village's website.

All existing rental properties must be registered by January 1, 2026. Inspections must be completed by January 1, 2027. New rental properties must be registered prior to being offered for rent.

Failure to register a rental property may result in civil infractions, fines up to $1,000, and possible revocation of the rental license.

"The goal is to ensure all rental housing in Lawton is safe, code-compliant, and properly maintained," said Village officials. "These new requirements will help protect tenants and ensure quality housing throughout the community."

Property owners and operators are encouraged to begin the registration process early to avoid delays.

For more details and to access the full text of the ordinance, visit **www.LawtonMI.org.**

NOTICE OF HEARING TO REAFFIRM THE WAVERLY TOWNSHIP SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT ESTABLISHED FOR FIRE PROTECTION AND OPERATION AND SPREAD OF ASSESSMENT

The Waverly Township Board HEREBY sets the **7th day of August, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.,** for a public hearing on the estimated costs of the established Special Assessment District to defray the expenses of fire protection/equipment by reaffirming the special assessment among the benefitted real property owners of Waverly Township. The benefitted real property owners of the township paid a total of 1.4 mil under the previous renewal of the special assessment. This reaffirmed special assessment would be set at 1.4 mil for **2025.**

It appears the cost of contracting for services and operation, equipment and apparatus will be approximately $109,390.00 for the tax year 2025.
It is contemplated that property with a taxable value of $25,000 would be charged $25.00 per year, per 1.0 mil.

The hearing will be held at the Waverly Township Hall, 42114 M-43, Paw Paw, Michigan, at which time the Waverly Township Board shall be in session to discuss and hear comments which may be offered regarding the reaffirmation of the Special Assessment District.

Property owners have a right to circulate a petition requiring this matter to be placed on the ballot. The owners of 10% of the total lands in the township must sign the petition to request the Township Board to hold a special election, rather than just reaffirming the Special Assessment District.

The Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services to those with disabilities planning to attend upon three (3) days= notice to the Township Clerk. Individuals who require such services should contact the Township at the address listed above or by telephone at (269) 657-1776.

Dated: July 7, 2025
Starr Houston, Clerk Waverly Township

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING VILLAGE OF PAW PAW PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission of the Village of Paw Paw will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, August 7, 2025 at 7:00 pm, at the Paw Paw Township Hall, located at 114 N. Gremps, Paw Paw, Michigan to consider the following application:

APPLICANT	DDO Paw Paw, LLC C/O Matt O'Connor
APPLICATION TYPES	1. Special Land Use Review for a Major Amendment to a Planned Unit Development; 2. Site Plan Review; and 3. Site Condominium Review
PROJECT ADDRESS	UNADDRESSED/VACANT PARCEL
PARCEL NUMBER(S)	80-47-581-033-03
ZONING DISTRICT	R-M, MULTIPLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST	The applicant requests a special land use permit to develop a 66-unit multiple-family development and 50-unit single-family site condominium development within a Planned Unit Development (PUD) at a residential density of 6.37 units per acre. The request consists of a major amendment to a previously approved PUD that consisted of a 49-unit site condominium development, 28-unit townhome condominium development, and 48-unit multiple-family development.

This application is available at the Village of Paw Paw offices for public examination and review during normal business hours. Interested persons may submit comments in writing before the public hearing, or appear in person at the public hearing to become part of the hearing record. The Village of Paw Paw will provide necessary and reasonable aids and services for disabled persons upon 5 days prior notice to the Village Offices at (269) 657-3148.

Kathy Larson, Chair
Village of Paw Paw Planning Commission

From the Prosecutor's Desk

For the month of June 2025:

Misdemeanor cases authorized -118
Felony Cases Authorized – 70
Authorizations by category (not all inclusive):
Absconding on Bond – Felony - 1
Assault
Misdemeanor – Assault - 17
Assault with a Dangerous Weapon – 5
Resisting/Obstructing/Assaulting a Police Officer - 10
Assault with Intent to Do Great Bodily Harm - 6
Breaking and Entering/Home Invasion - 2
Criminal Sexual Conduct – All Degrees - 1
Child Abuse – 2
Domestic Violence Misdemeanor – 37
Felony – 4
Fleeing and Eluding a Police Officer – 4
Larceny
Larceny/Retail Fraud – Misdemeanor – 17
Larceny/Retail Fraud - Felony -2
Uttering and Publishing – 2
Unlawful Driving Away of a Vehicle/Unlawful Use – 2
Receiving and Concealing Stolen Property -2
Operating while impaired/intoxicated Misdemeanor – 16
Felony -4 Possession/Delivery of a controlled substance other than methamphetamine - 5
Possession/Delivery of Methamphetamine -17 Weapons Charges -7 Involuntary Manslaughter - 1

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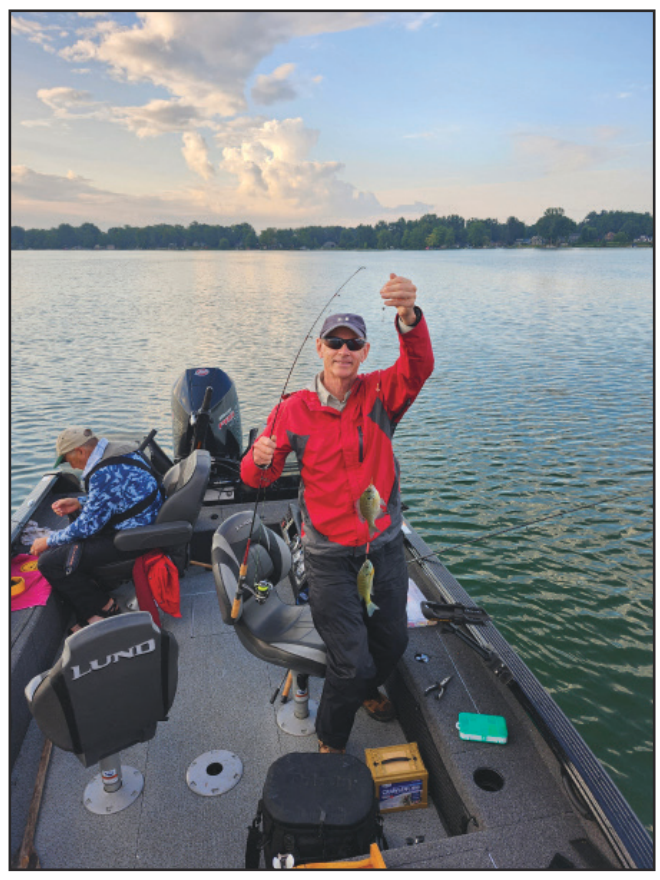
I SAW IT IN THE FLASHES

FISHING FEATURELESS AND MUDDY LAKES



Rich with a decent double of gills

Recently we fished a shallow tea colored lake. This lake was shallow with a maximum depth of sixteen feet. It was more like a mini reservoir than a lake. The visibility was minimal as compared to our deeper and clearer lakes that we often fish.

This got me to thinking which can be troublesome in itself. We have three very dark colored lakes. And in each case weed growth is nearly nonexistent. What weeds that we find are in very shallow water.

On our clear water lakes, we have a thermocline between eighteen to twenty feet. On the dark colored waters, we find the thermocline ten to fourteen feet down. On this particular lake we were fishing there was no thermocline.

The fish were nose to the bottom. The best depth was between twelve and sixteen feet of water. Two of our dirty colored lakes that we fish, the fish will be found eight to twelve feet down.

While I prefer a cleaner body of water, I enjoy catching fish, period. In most cases we fish differently than the clear lakes. On the particular shallow lake mentioned earlier we drifted slowly.

Our baits had to be within six inches of the bottom. Anything higher resulted in fewer fish. As is the case when we drift, we usually have one rod in the rod holder and we cast with a second rod. We have either a small soft glow egg/bead or glow colored flies. If it doesn't glow it doesn't go is our motto. Glow works great in dark waters.

The stationary rod was rigged up with perch flies and rubber spiders. We tipped these baits with one-inch of a worm. In place of a sinker, we added a Hali jig.

We also like casting a small teardrop with a Bully Spider. In this scenario we add a very small split shot. The goal is a very slow fall. Give this a try sometime

Our casting rods were rigged mainly with a small spinner. The Charlie Brewer Crappie Bee is a good choice as would a small pony head style jig. The spinner blade throws off some flash and vibration which is important is dirty water. We reel these baits in very slowly. We use a one thirty second ounce or possibly a one-sixteenth ounce jig.

Bass and crappie readily hit these small spinners. If targeting just bass then we would go with a safety spin style spinner.

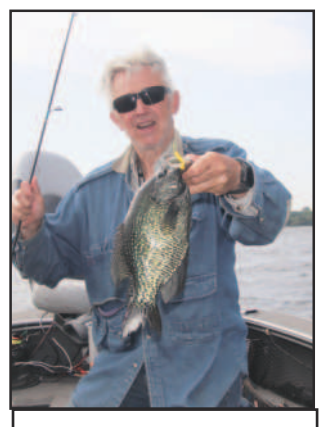
Trolling was our primary technique on dark or stained waters. It still is on the slightly deeper lakes that we fish. We tie up a small mini crawler harness rig using two size eight hooks spaced one-inch apart. This is our go to bluegill trolling set-up. We troll between a half mile an hour up to one mile an hour. A small sinker is required. The weight of the sinker is determined by the speed you are going and how far down that you want the spinner to be. Trolling small spinners is a fun way to fish and should be tried a few times each summer.

Trolling for the crappies we use a combination of spinners and small crankbaits. Few anglers troll these baits for crappie. Out best trolling speed is around one mile per hour but we have gone as fast as 1.5 miles per hour. The key is in covering water.

Many times, the fish will be spread pout horizontally as compared to vertically in a clear lake. We add a six-inch Church planner board when running more than four rods.

My favorite bass and pike lure would be tandem blade spinner. We experiment with various blades. Some days a willow leaf is best and other days the Indiana blade is better. Use a quality blade that throws off a lot of flash.

During the summer you can become fairly aggressive with a spinner. The pike and bass have no problem hammering a spinner that is ripped thru the water column. The vibration makes a big difference. Give a dark colored watered lake a chance. There are plenty of fish in these lakes. And remember to stop in at Bob's Gun and Tackle Shop.



Jack Payne

Payne is a member of OWAA (outdoor writers association of America). He is an avid outdoorsperson who enjoys fishing, hunting, hiking and cooking. This column will hopefully enhance your outdoor experiences. "While I may have some knowledge, I am very fortunate that I do know many true experts that share their knowledge with me," said Payne. "Together, hopefully we all can learn and experience more fun in the great outdoors." Payne resides in southwest Michigan. His column will appear weekly in the Courier Leader/ Flashes.

VILLAGE OF LAWRENCE, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN
AMENDMENT TO COMPILED LAW CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE III
Sec. 2-82 Village Manager

NOTICE :
Ordinance No. 2-14-2011 amendment to Chapter 2, Article III Sec. 2-82 was adopted by Village Council on July 8, 2025.

ORDINANCE OF 2-14-2011

AMENDMENT TO THE CODE OF ORDINANCES

The amendment to Sec. 2-82.-Responsibilites, functions and duties is as follows:

a. ~~(a) The village manager shall be the chief administrative officer of the village and shall be responsible to the village council for the efficient administration of all affairs of the village and shall exercise management supervision over all departments and over all public property belonging to the village.~~
b. ~~The village manager shall have the following functions and duties:~~
   1. ~~Shall be authorized to attend all meetings of the village council and committees thereof and take part therein but without a vote;~~
   2. ~~Prepare and administer an annual budget as provided for in the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, Act No. 2 of the Public Acts of 1963; submit it to council and recommend its adoption;~~
   3. ~~Investigate all complaints concerning the administration of the village and shall have the authority at all times to inspect books, records and papers of any agent, employee or officer of the village;~~
   4. ~~Make recommendations to the council for the adoption of such measures including funding i.e.; grants and loans as may be deemed necessary or expedient for the improvement or betterment of the village;~~
   5. ~~Perform other duties as directed by the village council from time to time;~~
   6. ~~Serve as the administrator in charge of the village's departments including, but not limited to: police, DPW, and administration to coordinate and oversee compliance with state legal requirements.~~
   7. ~~Act as the chief ordinance, code enforcement administrator, zoning administrator, and street administrator for the village; provided, that this delegation of authority shall not authorize the village to usurp the authority of the county and its officers to enforce those codes and ordinances for which the county is responsible under state law.~~
   8. ~~Be responsible for human resource management and enforce personnel rules adopted by the village council. The manager shall recommend to the administrative committee of the council proposed salaries and wages for all employees of the village;~~
   9. ~~Act as purchasing agent of the village;~~
      a. ~~To purchase all materials, supplies, or equipment, including insurance, for which funds are provided in the budget;~~
      b. ~~Purchasing of goods and services shall be done in a cost effective manner; and~~
      c. ~~He or she may not purchase any unbudgeted item which exceeds the ceiling set by the village council, absent specific authorized action by the village council. The village manager shall have the authority to purchase any product or service regardless of its cost when such a purchase is necessitated by an emergency condition. "Emergency condition" is defined to mean any event that presents an imminent threat to the public health or safety or any event that would result in the disruption of a village service that is essential to the public health or safety;~~
   10. ~~Devote his or her entire work time to the discharge of official duties and he or she shall have no outside employment or retainer, unless approved by the village council or as may be authorized pursuant to the village manager's contract;~~
   11. ~~Responsible for the hiring and firing of all village employees in cooperation with department heads. Dismissal of department heads to be subject to council approval;~~
   12. ~~Be responsible for department head and direct reports employee reviews; and~~
   13. ~~Prepare and maintain written policies and procedures defining the duties and functions of the several officers and departments of the village, subject to approval by the appropriate committee.~~

The Village Manager shall perform the duties as defined in the job description for Village Manager as approved by the Village Council.

The Ordinance amendment shall take effect July 17, 2025. A full copy of the Ordinance is available on the Village website at **www.lawrencemi.org.**

Amy Cordes
Village Clerk
269-674-8161

The Van Buren Intermediate School District is now accepting bids for the installation of LVP and carpet at Cedar Street Elementary School, 555 Cedar Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079 as outlined in the bid packet. Bid packets are available for download at **www.vbisd.org** under District Services – Business Office. Bids are due **July 28, 2025, at 2:00 PM** at the Van Buren Intermediate School District Business Office, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids received after that time will not be accepted and returned unopened. The Board of Education shall not accept a bid unless it includes both sworn and notarized familial affidavit and Iran linked business affidavit. The Van Buren Intermediate School District reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any irregularities which it deems to be in the best interest of Van Buren Intermediate School District, and the right to award the contract to other than lowest bidder.

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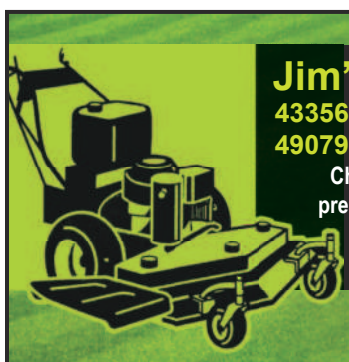
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